

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 ACDA-12
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NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 HA-05
EB-08 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /121 W
-----108373 231650Z /42

R 231447Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4612
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 02560

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG IS US
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN PERCEPTIONS OF U.S. ROLE

SUMMARY: SEVERAL THEMES ON U.S. ROLE IN PEACE PROCESS
RUN THROUGH WEEKEND'S OFFICIALLY GUIDED EDITORIALS, ALL OF
WHICH IMPLY DISENCHANTMENT WITH U.S. ROLE. EGYPTIAN
PUBLIC OPINION LEADERS NO LONGER SATISFIED WITH DECLARA-
TIONS OF SUPPORT ON PEACE PROCESS BUT WANT U.S. TO IN-
FLUENCE ISRAEL TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. PRESS
VIEWS CONTINUED U.S. ARMS DELIVERIES AS LIKELY INCREASE
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ISRAELI "INTRANSIGENCE" AND ASKS WHETHER U.S. ADMINIS-
TRATION NOW, AS IN 1956, IS WILLING AND ABLE TO FORCE
ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL. PRESS TREATMENT REFLECTS FACT THAT
MANY OF OUR CLOSEST FRIENDS ARE BEGINNING TO DOUBT U.S.
WILL ACT IN SUPPORT ITS OWN POLICIES. END SUMMARY.

1. ARMAMENTS. AKHBAR'S MAIN EDITORIAL JAN 23 CLAIMS

ISRAEL PERSUADED U.S. PUBLIC OPINION, AND OFFICIALS, THAT MODERN ARMS WOULD PROTECT ITS SECURITY, ENCOURAGING ISRAEL TO MOVE TOWARDS PEACE WITHOUT FEAR. WORLD EXPECTED ISRAEL REPLY POSITIVELY TO PEACE INITIATIVE, BUT THIS DID NOT TRANSPIRE. RATHER, ISRAEL INSISTED ON CONTINUED OCCUPATION OF ARAB LAND AS CONDITION FOR PEACE. ARMS NO LONGER USED TO PROTECT ISRAELI SECURITY BUT TO ENABLE IT CHALLENGE WORLD AND U.S. AMERICAN ARMS PERMIT ISRAEL ADOPT POLICY OF "ARROGANCE", THREATENING CHANCES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY. SAME THEME CARRIED IN WEEKLY AHRAR (MOUTHPIECE OF RIGHT WING LIBERAL PARTY), FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL IN SUNDAY'S AHRAH BY MOUSSA SABRI, SATURDAY COLUMN BY RA'ID ATTAR (REPORTEDLY CLOSE TO PRESIDENT SADAT), AND AKHBAR'S MUSTAFA AMIN.

2. U.S. STAND NEEDS CLARIFICATION. HAMDI GAMAL (MANAGING EDITOR OF AHRAH), ON JAN 23, QUESTIONED U.S. POLICY TOWARD ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS. GAMAL NOTED U.S. DECLARATIONS AT UN, OFFICIAL STATEMENTS ISSUED BY STATE DEPARTMENT AND POSITIONS ADOPTED PERSONALLY BY PRESIDENT CARTER ALL OPPOSE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS. NEVERTHELESS, ACCORDING GAMAL, IT NECESSARY FOR U.S. TO REPEAT ITS POSITION FRANKLY AND CLEARLY NOW. GAMAL'S RECOMMENDATION SECONDED BY MOUSSA SABRI, WHO CALLED ON AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION TO DEFINE CLEARLY ITS STAND. ACCORDING SABRI, QUESTION NOT ONE OF IMPOSING SOLUTION BUT OF DEFINING POSITION
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SO THAT AMERICAN PEOPLE AND WORLD PUBLIC FULLY AWARE OF FACTS; PARTICULARLY, WHO IS TO BLAME FOR DESTROYING PEACE INITIATIVE. U.S. POSITION, HE CONCLUDED, MUST BE DEFINED IN EFFECTIVE TERMS TO DIVEST ISRAELI NEGOTIATOR OF ALL "METHODS OF MANEUVER." ADMINISTRATION MUST DEFINE PRINCIPLES WITHOUT WHICH PEACE CANNOT BE REALIZED.

3. 1956-78 COMPARISON. TYPICAL COMMENT IN SUNDAY AKHBAR COLUMN BY MUSTAFA AMIN STATED EGYPTIAN PUBLIC "WONDERING" HOW U.S. IN 1956 COMPELLED BRITAIN, FRANCE AND ISRAEL TO WITHDRAW, WHILE IN 1978 IT UNABLE TO COMPEL SIMILAR WITHDRAWAL BY ONLY ISRAEL? AMIN NOTED SOME MAY TERM BEGIN AN EXTREMIST, A STUBBORN INDIVIDUAL WHO STICKS TO HIS STAND. HOWEVER, BEN-GURION, TOO, WAS AN EXTREMIST. NEVERTHELESS, BEN-GURION WAS FORCED BY EISENHOWER TO PULL OUT COMPLETELY. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, EGYPTIAN PUBLIC "WONDERS" WHY U.S. ADMINISTRATION SUPPLYING ISRAEL WITH NEW AIRCRAFT. "WILL THIS ENCOURAGE ISRAEL TO WORK FOR PEACE OR WAR?" AHRAR EDITORIALIZED SIMILARLY, CLAIMING USG COULD PRESSURE ISRAEL TO FORCE HER ADOPT STANCE FAVORED BY AMERICA. RHETORICALLY, PAPER QUESTIONED WHETHER U.S., IN 1956,

WAS MORE POWERFUL AND CAPABLE THAN NOW--OR WHETHER USG,
IN 1956, WANTED AN EVACUATION OF SINAI, WHEREAS SITUATION
NOW CHANGED.

4. WARNING. AKHBAR'S MANAGING EDITOR AHMED ZEIN CLAIMED
WARNING CONTAINED IN SADAT'S JAN 21 ADDRESS MEANT NOT
SOLELY FOR ISRAELIS BUT FOR AMERICAN PEOPLE, WHO HAVE
BEEN SUPPORTING ISRAEL AS RESULT THEIR DECEPTION BY
PROPAGANDA. GUMHURIYYA, TOO, STATED SADAT'S WARNING
ADDRESSED TO ALL MAJOR POWERS TO INTERVENE AND PROTECT
PEACE INITIATIVE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 02560

5. ARMS FOR EGYPT. SEVERAL COLUMNISTS PICKED UP ON
SADAT'S REQUEST FOR U.S. ARMS. AMIN SAID SADAT'S REQUEST
IS "MINIMAL" BECAUSE IT WOULD NOT BE REASONABLE "FOR
U.S. TO IMPOSE EMBARGO ON EGYPT SIMILAR TO SOVIET UNION'S"
NOR FOR U.S. "TO SUPPORT SOVIET PUNISHMENT." RA'ID

ATTAR, ON JAN 22, SAID U.S. INSISTENCE ON CONTINUING
IMBALANCE BETWEEN LARGEST ARAB COUNTRY (BEHAVING RATION-
ALLY) AND ISRAEL (STILL GOVERNED BY SPIRIT OF SAMSON)
WILL FURTHER DESTABILIZE REGION. "RETREAT", ATTAR
CLAIMED, WILL SHAKE U.S. PRESTIGE THROUGHOUT WORLD,
PARTICULARLY IN VIEW SOVIET ESCALATION OF ARMS DELIVERIES
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ON EGYPT'S BORDERS.

6. COMMENT: MEDIA TREATMENT REFLECT VIEWS LEADING
EGYPTIANS WHICH WE INCREASINGLY HEAR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN
PA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE LAYLA TAKLA, FOR EXAMPLE,
ON TWO RECENT OCCASIONS CLOSELY QUESTIONED VISITING
AMERICAN OFFICIALS ON WHETHER CARTER ADMINISTRATION
UNABLE, OR UNWILLING, EXERT PRESSURE ON ISRAEL. IF
FORMER, EGYPT MUST CHANGE ITS POLICY OF RELIANCE ON U.S.
IF LATTER, U.S. ADMINISTRATION MUST "BE CONVINCED"
SHOULDER ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. SPEAKER MARIE, TOO, HAS
URGED GREATER AMERICAN ACTIVISM. SENIOR EGYPTIAN ARAB
LEAGUE OFFICIAL, PUT IT SUCCINCTLY SAYING "IF U.S.
CONTINUES TO PLAY ONLY A NEUTRAL MEDIATING ROLE, AND
REFUSES TO SUPPORT EGYPT EVEN WHEN EGYPTIAN AND U.S.
POSITIONS ARE TOTALLY COMPATIBLE, E.G., SETTLEMENTS,
GOD HELP US." EILTS

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Message Attributes

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